

A
SERMON

Preach'd before

King Charles II.

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ON THE

F A S T

(Appointed Jan. 30.)

FOR THE

Execrable Murder

OF HIS

Royal Father.

By ROBERT SOUTH. D. D.

Now first Printed.

*To be resolute in a good Cause, is to bring upon our
selves the Punishments due to a Bad. See Page
112 of his Sermons, Vol I. and so on.*

L O N D O N:

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Royal Patent.

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Judges xix. 30.

*And it was so, that all that saw it
said, There was no such Deed
done, nor seen, from the Day that
the Children of Israel came up
out of the Land of Egypt, unto
this Day: Consider of it, take
Advice, and speak your Minds.*

THERE is a certain fatal Pertinence in the very Place of the Text ; for when there were Judges, there was no King in Israel ; tho' as to the Business, they were Judges of another Nature that removed ours. We have here an Account of a prodigious and horrid Action, cloathed with all the Circumstances of Wonder and Detestation, perpetrated at a Time when, upon Want of the Royal Power, *Judg. 21. v. ult.* Every Man did that which was right in his own Eyes ; or, in another Dialect, as the Spirit moved him. And for the Authors of this execrable Fact, we have them defending with their Swords, and for some Time asserting their Villany with Success and Victory against their Brethren, twice beaten and massacred before them in a righteous Cause, as we may see in the next Chapter.

I do not profess my self either delighted or skill'd in mystical Interpretations, and to wiredraw the Sense of the Place, so as to make the very Design of it speak the King's Death, as some who can interpret Scripture, as if the whole Intent of the Book of God was to foretel Things transacted in *England* and *Scotland* only, that there cannot be so much as a House fired, or a Leg or an Arm broken, but they can, *ex post facto*, find it in *Daniel* or the *Revelations*. No, I pretend to no such Skill; it is enough for me, if I can bring the present Business and Text together, not by Design, but by Accommodation; and as the Phrase runs full and high, so I doubt not but to find such a Parallel in the Things themselves, that it may be a Question, which of the two may have better Claim to the Expression?

The Case here, that is worded with such high Aggravations, was an Injury done to one single Levite, in the villanous Rape of his Concubine; the Resentment of which was so high, that it engaged all the Tribes to revenge his Quarrel with a Civil War; in which, the Pre-eminence and Conduct, by the Designation of God himself, was appointed to the Royal Tribe of *Judah*, the Scepter being most concerned to assert the Privileges, and revenge the Injuries done to the Crozier.

We have the *Benjamites* sturdily abetting what they had impiously done, and for a while victorious in Villany, and by the Help of God's Providence, trampled upon those that fought by the Warrant of his Precept.

Let us now see the Counter-part. He that dates the King's Murder from the fatal Blow given upon the Scaffold, judges like him that thinks it's the last Stroke alone that fells the Tree; the killing of his Person was only a Consummation of the Murder, first began in his Prerogative. We have heard the Knack of a double Capacity, personal and politick, and I suppose they distinguished the King into the two, that each Party might murder him under one: And for those whose

Loyalty

Loyalty consists only in decrying that Action, that was taken out of their Hands, and having laid the Premises, protest against the Conclusion ; they cover their Prevarications with a Fig-leaf, and only differ from the other Party in this, That these endeavour'd to disguise the Authors of the Fact, whereas the others only disguised the Executioner.

Well then, when a long Sun-shine of Mercy had ripened the Sins of the Nation, so that it was now ready for the shaking of divine Vengeance, the Seeds of Faction and Rebellion having for a long Time been studiously sown by schismatical Libels, and well water'd by seditious Lectures, the first Assault was made against the Tribe of *Levi*, by the implacable Enemies of the Church; the Fury of whose Lust and Ambition, nothing could allay, till they had full Scope to prostrate her Honour, and to ravish her Revenues ; till at last cut and divided, and torn in pieces, as she was, she lay a ghastly Spectacle to all Beholders, to all the *Israel of God*.---- And as this was done to our *English Levites*, so it was acted, I may say, by *Benjamites* ; that is, such as ravened like Wolves ; till by their Rapines and Sacrilege, they had made their Mefs five times bigger than their Brethrens : The Prosecution of which Quarrel was own'd by the Royal Standard, and the Defender of the Church managed by the Defender of the Faith ; in which, it pleased the All-wise God to cause *Judab* to fall before *Benjamin*, the Lyon to be a Prey to the Wolf ; by which fatal Tract of Providence, the King being kill'd before in 45, by natural and immediate Sequel ; to compleat the Action, *Charles* was murder'd in 48. And this is the black Subject and Occasion of this Days Solemnity ; in reflecting upon which, if a just Detestation (that is, a due Apprehension) of the blackest Fact that ever the Sun saw, (for he withdrew upon the Sufferings of our Saviour) chance to give an Edge to some of my Expressions, Let those know, whose Actions have made Truth look like a Sarcasm, and bare Descriptions sharper than *Invectives* ; I say, let those Cen-
surers

furers know, (whose Innocence lies only in their Indemnity) That to drop the blackest Ink, and the bitterest Gall upon the Fact, is not Satyr but Propriety.

Now, since the Text says, *There was no such Deeds either done or seen* ; with which Words I cloath this present Subject, the proper Prosecution of them, as apply'd to this Occasion, will be to shew wherein the dismal Strangeness of the Deed consists ; and since the Nature of every Action is to be learnt by reflecting upon the Agent, and the Object, with all that Retinue of Circumstances that attend and specify it under a certain Determination, I shall accordingly distribute my Discourse into these Materials.

- I. I shall consider the Person that suffered.
- II. Shew the Preparation and Introduction to it.
- III. Shew the Agent who acted in it.
- IV. Describe the Manner of the Fact, and the Circumstances. And,
- V. Lastly, Point out the destructive and grim Consequences of it.

First, For the Person that suffer'd : He was a King, and what is more, such a King, not chose, but born to it ; that is, owing his Kingdom not to the Vogue of the Popularity, but to the Suffrage of Nature. He was a *David*, a *Saint*, a *King*, but never a *Shepherd* ; all the Royal Blood in Christendom ran in his Veins ; that is, many Kings went to the making of him : And his Improvements and Education fell in no wise below his Extract. He was accurate in all the recommending Excellencies of human Accomplishments ; able to deserve, had he not inherited a Kingdom ; and of so controuling a Genius, that in every Science he attempted, he did not so much study as reign ; and appeared not only a Proficient, but a Prince.--- And to go no farther for a Testimony, let his own excellent Writings witness so much, which speak him no less an Author than a Monarch, compos'd with such an unfailling Accuracy, such

a Commanding Majestick Pathos, as if they had been writ, not with a *Pen*, but a *Sceptre* : And as for those whose virulent and ridiculous Calumnies ascribe that incomparable Work to others, I say, it is a sufficient Argument, that those did not write it, because they could not, it is hard to counterfeit the spirit of Majesty, and the inimitable Peculiarities of an incommunicable Genius and Condition.----- At the Council-board, he had the Ability still to give himself the best Council, but the unhappy Modesty to diffide in it, indeed his only Fault ; for Modesty is a *Paradox* in Majesty, and Humility a *Solécism* in Supremacy.

Look we next upon his Piety, and unparallél'd Virtues, tho' without an Absurdity, I may affirm, That his very Endowments of Nature were supernatural ; so pious was he, that had others measured their Obedience to him, by his Obedience to God, he had been the greatest Monarch in the World, as eminent for frequenting the Temple, as *Solomon* for building one ; no Occasion ever interfer'd with his Devotion, nor Business of State call out his Times of Attendance in the Church, so ardent, full, and melting in his private Devotions, that coming down from his Closet, he has been reported always to change his Band ; so firm in the Protestant Cause, that tho' he convers'd in the Midst of Temptations, in the very Bosome of *Spain*, and tho' *France* lay in his Breast, yet nothing could alter him ; but that he espoused the Cause of Religion even more than his beloved Queen. He every way filled the Title under which we pray for him ; he could defend his Religion as a King, dispute for it as a Divine, and die for it as a Martyr : I think I shall speak a great Truth if I say, that the only thing which makes Protestantism considerable in Christendom, is the Church of *England* ; and the only thing that does now cement and confirm the Church of *England*, is the Blood of this blessed Saint. He was so well skill'd in Controversies, that we might well stile him in all Causes Ecclesiastical ;

Ecclesiastical ; not only supreme Governour, but Moderator ; nor more fit to fill the Throne than the Chair ; and withal, so exact an Observer and Royal Rewarder of all such Performances, that it was an Encouragement for a Man to be a Divine under such a Prince, which eminent Piety of his was set off with the whole Train of moral Vertues. His Temperance was so great and impregnable amidst all the Allurements with which the Courts of Kings are apt to melt even the most stoical and resolved Minds, that he did at the same time both teach and upbraid the Court ; so that it was not their own Vice so much as his Example, that render'd their Debauchery inexcusable. Look over the whole List of our Kings, and take in the Kings of *Israel* to boot, and see who kept the Bonds of Conjugal Affection so inviolate : *David* was eminent for Repenting, *Charles* for not needing Repentance. None ever of greater Fortitude of Mind, which was made more resplendent in the Conquest of himself, and those miraculous Instances of passive Valour, than if he had strowed the Field with all the Rebel Armies, and to the Justness of his own Cause joyn'd the Success of theirs, and yet withal so meek, so gentle, so merciful, and that even to a Cruelty to himself, that if ever the Lion and the Lamb met together, if ever Courage and Meekness united, it was in the Breast of this Royal Person---. And which makes the Rebellion more ugly and intollerable, there was scarce any person of Note amongst his Enemies, who even fighting against him, did not wear his Colours, and carry some peculiar Mark of his Favours and Obligations : Some were his own menial Servants, and Eate at his Table before they lift up their Heels against him ; some received from him Honours, some Offices and Employments, and I could name particulars of each kind, did I think their Names fit to be heard in a Church, or from the Pulpit. In short, He so behaved himself towards them, that their Rebellion might be Malice indeed, but could not be Revenge. These his personal Virtues

shew

shed a suitable Influence upon his Government for the space of seventeen Years; the Peace, Plenty, and Honour of the *English* spread it self, even to the Envy of all neighbouring Nations; and when that Plenty had pamper'd them into Unruliness and Rebellion, yet the Justice of his Government left them still at a Loss for an Occasion; till at length, Ship-money was pitched upon as fit to be reformed into Excise and Taxes, and the Burden of his Subjects to be taken off by Plunder and Sequestration.

The King now to scatter that Cloud, which began to gather and look black both upon the Church and State, made those Condescensions to their impudent Petitions, that they had scarce any thing to make War for, but was granted them already; and having thus stript himself of his Frerogative, he made it clear to the World, that there was nothing left for them to fight for but his Life. Afterwards, in the Prosecution of this unnatural War, what Overtures did he make for Peace; nay, when he had his Sword in his Hand, his Armies about him, and a Cause to justifie him before God and Man? How did he chuse to compound himself into nothing, to expose and un-king himself, by yielding to their hard and inhuman Conditions? But all was nothing, he might as well compliment a Mastiff, or court a Tiger, as think to win those who were now harden'd in Blood, and thorough-pac'd in Rebellion. The Truth is, his Conscience un-crown'd him, as having a Mind too pure to admit of those Maxims and Practices of State, that usually make Princes great and successful. Having thus, with an unheard of Loyalty, fought against and conquer'd him, they commit him to Prison, and then the King himself notes, that it has been always observed, That there is but little Distance between the Prisons of Kings and their Graves: To which I further subjoyn, That where the Observation is constant, there must needs be some certain standing Cause of the Connection of things observed, and indeed it is a direct Transition from the

Prison to the Grave ; a *Carceribus ad Metam*, the Difference only being this, That he who is Buried, is imprisoned under Ground ; and he who is Imprisoned, is buried above Ground. But to finish this poor imperfect Description, tho' it is of a Person so renown'd, that he neither needs the best, nor can be injur'd by the worst ; yet in short, he was a Prince, whose Vertues were as Prodigious as his Sufferings ; a true *Pater Patriæ*, a Father of his Country, if but this only, That he was the Father of such a Son. And yet this most innocent of Men, and the best of Kings, so pious, so virtuous, so learned, and judicious, so merciful and obliging, was rebelled against, drove out of his own House, pursued like a Partridge upon the Mountains, and like an Exile in his own Dominions, inhumanly imprisoned ; and at length, for a Catastrophe of all, Barbarously Murder'd ; tho' in this, his Murder was the less of the two, that his Death releas'd him from the Prison.

Secondly. Having seen the Quality and Condition of the Person that suffered ; in the next place, let us see the Engines and preparations, by which they gradually ascended to the perpetration of this bloody Fact. As indeed it were but a poor preposterous Discourse to insist upon the Consequent, without taking Notice of the Antecedent. It were too long to dig to the Spring of this Rebellion, and to lead you to the Secrecy of its first Contrivance, but as *David's* phrase is upon another Occasion, ' It was fram'd and fashioned in the lowest parts of the Earth, and there it was fearfully and wonderfully made, a Work of Darkness and Retirement, removed from the Eyes of all Witnesses, nay, even from Conscience also, for Conscience was not admitted to their Councils,

But the first Design was to secure a Levite to consecrate their *Idol*, and a factious Ministry to christen it their Cause of God. They still own'd their party for *God's true Israel*, and being so, their Duty was to come out

out of *Egypt*, tho' they provided themselves a *Red Sea* for their Passage. For their Assistance, they repair'd to the Northern Steel, and bring in an unnatural, mercenary Army, that like Shoals of Locusts, covered the Land ; such as inherited the Description of those that God brought as Scourges upon his People the Jews ; a Nation, fierce, spoiled, and scattered ; and still we shall read, that God punished his People with an Army from the North, Jer: chap. 50. ver. 3. *Out of the North there cometh a Nation, which shall make the Land desolate.* And again, Jer. chap. 4. ver. 6. *I will bring Evil from the North, and a great Destruction.* Now, to endear and unite them into their Interest, they invented a *Covenant*, much like those that made a Covenant with Hell, and an Agreement with Death. It was the most solemn Piece of Perjury, the most fatal Engine against the Church, and Bane of Monarchy, the greatest Snare of Souls, and Mystery of Iniquity, that ever was hammer'd out by the Will, and Wickedness of Man.

I shall not, as they do, abuse Scripture Language, and call it, *The Blood of the Covenant*, but give it its proper Title ; it was the *Covenant of Blood*, such a one as *Simeon* and *Levi* made, when they were going about the like Design. The very Posture of taking it, was an ominous Mark of the Intent ; and their holding up their Hands, was a Sign they were ready to strike. It was such an Oglio of Treason and Tyranny, that one of their Assembly, of their own Prophets, gives this Testimony of it in his Narrative, and his Testimony is true, That it was such a Covenant, (whether you respect the Subject of Matter, or the Occasion of it, or the Persons that engaged in it, or lastly, the Manner of imposing it) as was never read, nor heard of, or did the World ever see the like. The Truth is, it bears no other Likeness to ancient Covenants, but that, as at the making of them, they slew their Beasts, and divided them : So this also was solemniz'd with Blood, Slaughter, and Division.

But

But that I may not accuse in general, without a particular Charge, read it over as it stands before the Synod's Works ; I mean their Catechism, to which it stands prefix'd ; as if without it, their System of Divinity were not compleat, nor their Children like to be well instructed, unless they were school'd to Treason, and catechis'd to Rebellion ; I say, in the Covenant, as it stands there, in the Third Article, they promise a Defence of the King only thus : That they will defend his Person only in the Preservation and Defence of the true Religion, and the Liberty of the Kingdoms. In which, it is evident, that their Promises of Loyalty to him, is not absolute, but conditional, bound Hand and Foot, with this Limitation, So far as he preserved the true Religion and Liberties of the Kingdoms : From which, I observe these two Things ; 1. That those who promise Obedience to their King, only so far as he preserves the true Religion, and the Liberties of the Kingdom, withal reserving to themselves the Judgment of what is true or false, and when these Liberties are invaded, and when not ; do by that put it into their own Power, to judge Religion false, and when their Liberties invaded, as they think convenient ; and then, upon such Judgment, to absolve themselves from their Allegiance. 2. That those very Persons who did thus covenant, had already, from Pulpit and Press, declar'd, the Religion and Worship of the Church of *England*, then maintained by the King, to be popish and idolatrous ; and withal, that the King had actually invaded their Liberties. Now, for Men to suspend their Obedience, upon a certain Condition, which Condition, they declar'd, at the same Time, not perform'd, was not to profess Obedience, but to remonstrate the Reasons of their intended Disobedience,

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We see here the Doctrine of their Covenant; see the Use of this Doctrine, as it was charg'd home, with a suitable Application, in a War rais'd against the King, in the cruel Usage and Imprisonment, killing and sequestring, and undoing all that adhered to him, voting Non-Address to himself, &c. All which horrid Proceedings, tho' his Majesty now forgives, yet the World will not, cannot ever forget, Indemnity is not always Oblivion. But to draw the Premises close to the Purpose, thus I argue; That which was the proper Means that enabled the King's mortal Enemies to make War against him, upon that War to conquer, upon that Conquest to imprison him, and lastly, upon that Imprisonment, inevitably to put the Power into the Hands of those, that in the End, murder'd him: That according to the genuine Consequences of Reason, was the natural Cause of his Murder. This is the Proposition I assert, and shall not trouble my self to make the Assumption. And indeed, those that wipe their Mouths, and think themselves innocent, by clapping this Act upon the Army, make just the same Plea that *Pilate* did for his Innocence, in the Death of Christ, because he left the Execution to the Soldiers: Or what the Army may make for clearing themselves of all the Blood they have spilt, by charging it upon their Swords.--- I conclude therefore, that this was the gradual Process to this horrid Fact; this the Train laid to blow up Monarchy; this the Step, by which the King ascended the Scaffold.

Thirdly, Come we now to shew, who were the Actors in this tragical Scene.

When thro' the Anger of Providence, a thriving Army of Rebels had worsted Justice, clear'd the Field, subdu'd all Oppositions and Oppressions, even to a very Insurrection of Conscience, so that Impunity at length grew into the Reputation of Piety, and Success gave the Rebellion the Varnish of Religion, and that

that they might consummate their Villany, the Gown was called in to compleat the Execution of the Sword, and to make *westminster-Hall* a Place for taking away Lives, as well as Estates, a new Court was set up, and Judges pick'd, who had Nothing to do with Justice, but so far, as they were fit to be the Objects of it ; in which, they first of all began with a Confutation of the *Civilians* Notion of Justice and Jurisdiction ; it being no longer with them an Act of supreme Power ; such an inferior Fry, such a Mechanick Rabble were they, having not so much as any Arms to shew, but what they used in Rebellion. That when I survey a List of the King's Judges, and the Witnesses against him, I seem to have before me, a Catalogue of all Trades, and such as might better fill the Shops of *westminster-Hall*, than the Benches, some of which came to be Possessors of the King's Houses, who before had no certain Dwelling but his High-way ; and some of them might have continued Tradesmen still, had not Want, and Inability to Trade, sent them to the Wars. Now, that the King, and such a King, should be murder'd by such, the meanest and basest of all his Subjects ; and not like *Nimrod*, (as some have call'd him) but like an *Acteon*, be torn by a Pack of Blood-hounds ; That the Steam of a Dunghill should thus obscure the Sun ! This much enhances the Calamity of this Royal Person, and makes his Death as different from his who is slain and conquer'd by another King, as it is between being torn by a Lyon, add being eaten up by Vermin ; (pardon the Expression, but it came into my Mind, by speaking of those, many of which were sometime Beggars) For the Feet to trample upon, nay, to kick off the Head, who would not look upon it as a Monster ? But indeed, of all others, these were the fittest Instruments of such a Work ; for base Descent, and poor Education, dispose the Mind to Imperiousness and Cruelty, as the most savage Beasts are bred in Dens, and have their Extraction from under Ground. These therefore, were the worthy Judges and Condemners

of

of a King ; even the Refuse of the People, and the very Scum of the Nation, which was at that Time, both the uppermost, and basest Part of it.

Fourthly, Pass we now to the Circumstances and Manner of the Procedure, in the Management of this bloody Fact : And Circumstances, we know, have the greatest Cast in determining the Nature of all Actions, as we judge of any Man's Post or Quality by his Attendance.

First of all then, It was not like other Acts of Darkness, done in secret, nor as they used to preach, in Corners, but publickly, colour'd with the Face of Justice, managed with Openness and Solemnity, as solemn as the *League and Covenant* it self. History indeed affords us many Examples of Princes murdered in private, which tho' it be villanous, yet is in it self more excusable ; for he that does a Thing in secret, by the very Manner of doing it, confesses himself ashamed of the Thing he does ; but he that acts it in the Face of the Sun, vouches his Action, for laudable, great, and heroic. Having brought him to their High Court of Justice, so call'd, I conceive, because Justice was there Arraign'd and Condemn'd ; or perhaps, therefore, call'd Court of Justice, because it never shew'd any Mercy. Their By-way of Trial as unheard of as their Court, they permit him not so much as to speak in his own Defence, but with the Innocence and Silence of a Lamb, they condemn him to the Slaughter, and it had been well if they could as easily have imposed Silence upon his Blood. Being condemn'd, they spit in his Face, and deliver him to the Mockery and Affronts of Soldiers ; so that I wonder where the Blasphemy lies, which some charge upon those, who make the King's Sufferings somewhat resemble our Saviour's ? But is it Blasphemy to compare the King to Christ in that respect, in which Christ himself was made like a Servant ? Can he be like us in all things, and we not like him ? Certainly there was something in that Providence, that

so long ago appointed the Chapter of our Saviour's Passion to be read on the Day of our King's : And I am sure, the Resemblance is so near, that had he lived before him, he might have been a Type of him. I confess there is some Dispropiety in the Case, for they shewed themselves worse than Jews. But however, since they make this their Objection, That we make the King like Christ, I am willing it should be the greatest Commendation to be accounted as unlike Christ as they please.

Let us now follow him from this Mock-Tribunal, to the Place of his Residence till Execution.

Nothing remains to a Person condemned, and presently to leave the World, but these Two Things : *First*, To take Leave of his Friends ; a Thing not denied to the vilest Malefactor, which sufficiently appears, in that it has not been denied to themselves. Yet no Entreaties from him, or his Royal Consort, could prevail with the Murderers, to let her take the last Farewel and Commands of a dying Husband. He was permitted to make no Farewel but to the World. Thus was he treated, and stript of all, even from the Prerogative of a Prince, to the Privilege of a Malefactor.

Secondly, The next Thing desired by all dying Persons, is Freedom to converse with God, and prepare themselves to meet him at his Tribunal ; but with an *Italian* Cruelty to the Soul, as well as to the Body, they debar him of this Freedom also and Solitude ; his former Punishment is now too great an Enjoyment. But that they might shew themselves Enemies no less to private, than they had been to publick Prayers, they disturb his Retirement, and with Scoffs and Contumelies, upbraid those Devotions that were intended for them ; and I question not, but Fanatick Fury was then at the Height, and that they would even have laugh'd at Christ himself in his Devotions, had he but used his own Prayer.

With

With these Preludiums is he brought to the last Scene of Mockery and Cruelty, to a Stage erected before his own Palace, and for the greater Defiance of Majesty, before that part of it in which he was wont to display his Royalty, and to give Audience to Ambassadors; where now he could not obtain Audience to himself in his last Address to his abused Subjects: Then did he receive the fatal Blow, and at length finds that faithfully performed upon the Scaffold, that was at first promised in that Rebellious Parliament, *That he should be made a Glorious King.*

But even this Death was a Mercy from the Murderers, considering what Kinds of Death several propos'd, as they sat in Consultation about the Manner of it. Even no less than the Gibbet and the Halter, no less than to execute him in his Robes, and drive a Stake thro' his Head and Body, to stand as a Monument upon his Grave. In short, all those kind of Deaths were propos'd, that either their Malice could suggest, or their own Guilt deserve. And could these Men desire now in their Hearts, to live and plead for a Pardon from the Son, who had thus murder'd the Father? He that shall read that Place in the First of *Kings*, chap. ver. *Because thou hast let go out of thy Hand, a Man whom I appointed to utter Destruction, therefore thy Life shall go for his Life, and thy People for his People.* I say, he that shall read it with Loyalty and Apprehension, would tremble, and have Cause to look upon the Guilt of this sacred Blood lying upon the Nation, with so much Dread, that next to having a Hand in the King's Death, (give me Leave to use a new Expression upon a new Subject) he would almost fear to have a Hand in the Murderer's Life.

Now, we may know when God hath appointed a Man to Destruction, by these two Marks. *First*, when the Crime notoriously deserves Death, *2dly*, when God, by a Miracle delivers the Criminal to the Hand of Justice, as all the World must acknowledge, that he

did those Persons. I speak not only of those Wretches that openly imbrued their Hands in the bloody Sentence, but of those more considerable Traytors, who had the Villany to manage the Contrivance, and yet the Cunning to disappear in the Execution. They plead the Promises of Mercy, and they have had it ; for a Reprieve is too great a Pardon for the Murderers of their Prince, and others may now plead Repentance, and it is well if it makes them the fitter to die, but not worthy to live. But usually all the Professions such Villains make of Repentance, are only the feint Resentments of a guilty Horror, the Convulsions and last Breathings of a guilty Conscience : And I beseech God for those that escaped, that their Repentance be not such, that both themselves and the Nation may have Cause to repent of. But if they should indeed prove such as have no Conscience but Horror, who by the same Crimes will be made irreconcilable, by which they deserved to be unpardonable ; who would resume those Repentances upon Opportunity, which they made upon Extremity ? And being saved from the Gallows, make the usual Requital that is made to such a Deliverance ? If, I say, such Persons should be only for a Time chained and tied up, that they may gather more Fierceness, to run at length upon Majesty, Religion, Learning, Laws, Churches and Universities ; whether God intends by this, a Repetition of our former Confusion, or a general Massacre of our Persons, which is most likely ; the Lord in Mercy fit and enable us to bear the Smart of a misimprov'd Providence, and the insatiate Frustration of such a miraculous Deliverance.

But to return to this sacred Martyr, we have seen him murder'd : And is there now any other Scene for Cruelty to act ? Is not Death the End of the Murderers Malice, as well as of the Life of him that is murder'd ? No, there is another, and viler Instance of their sordid, implacable Cruelty, in the very embalming his Body, and taking out those Bowels, which,

had

had they not relented to his Enemies, had not been so handled. They gave Orders to those to whom the Work was committed, diligently to search and see, whether his Body was not infected with some loathsome Disease ; I suppose they meant that with which most of his Judges were troubled. Now every one must easily see, for them to intimate the Enquiry, was in Effect, to command the Report. And here let any one judge, whether the remorseless Malice of imbitter'd Rebels ever rose to such a Height of Tyranny, that the very Embalming his Body must be made a Means to corrupt his Name ; as if his Murder was not compleat, unless, together with his Life, they did also assassinate his Fame, and butcher his Reputation. But the Body of the Prince, innocent and virtuous to Admiration, had none of the Ruins and gentle Rottenness of our modern Debauchery, it was firm and clear, like his Conscience, he fell like a Cedar, no less fragrant than tall and stately ; Rottenness of Heart, and Rottenness of Bones, are the Bodies of his Murderers ; the Noisomeness of their Lives, might even retalliate and revenge their Sufferings ; and whilst they were under Execution, even poison'd the Executioner. But the last grand, comprehensive Circumstance of this Fact, which is, (as it were) the very Form and Spirit of it, that did actuate and run thro' all the rest, is, That it was done with the Pretences of Conscience, and Protestations of Religion, with Eyes lifted up to Heaven, Expostulations with God, Pleas of Providence, and inward Instigations ; till at length, with much Labour and many Groans, they were delivered of their intended Mischief. And certainly we have Cause to deplore this Murder with Fasting, if it were but for this Reason, that it was contrived and committed with Fasting ; every Fast portended some Villany, and still a Famine usher'd in a Plague : But as Hunger serves only for Appetite, so they never ordained a Humiliation, but for the doing of something, which being done, might dine them at a Thanksgiving. And such a Fury did abused

abused Piety inspire into the Church militant, upon their Exercises, that we might as well meet a hungry Bear, as a preaching Colonel, after a Fast, whose murderous Humiliation strangely verified that opposite Prophecy, in *Isaiah*, chap. 8. v. 21. *When they shall be hungry, they shall curse their King and their God, and look upwards.* That is, they shall rebel and blaspheme devoutly; tho' by the way, he that is always looking upwards, can little regard how *he walks below.* But was there any thing in the whole Book of God, to warrant this Rebellion, and instead of Obedience, to sacrifice him whom they should obey? Why, yes; Daniel dreamed a Dream; and there is something also in the Revelations, concerning a Beast, and the Horn, and the fifth Vial, and therefore the King ought undoubtedly to die. But if you or I cannot gather so much from these Places, it is because we are not inwardly enlighten'd: But others, more knowing, tho' not less wicked, insist not much upon the Warrant of Scripture, but plead Providential Dispensations; and God's Works must be regarded more than his Word; and their Latin Advocate, who, like the blind Adder, spits his Poison on the King's Person and Cause, speaks to the Matter roundly; *Deum secuti ducem, & impressa passim divina Vestigia venerantes, viam haud obscuram sed illustrem, & illius auspiciis commonstratam Apatefactam ingressi sumus.* But must we read God's Mind in his Footsteps, or in his Word? This is, as if when we have a Man's Hand-writing, we should endeavour to take his Meaning by his Foot. But still, Conscience, Conscience is pleaded a Covering for all Enormities, and an Answer to all Questions and Accusations. Ask them what made them fight against, imprison, and murder their lawful Sovereign? Why, Conscience: What made them extirpate the Government, and pocket the Revenues of the Church? Conscience: What made them perjure themselves with contrary Oaths? What made Swearing to be Sin, and For-swearing to be none? What made them lay

lay hold of God's Promises, and break their own ? Conscience : What made them persecute, sequester, and undo their Brethren, take their Estates, and get into their Places, and then say, they only robbed the *Egyptians* ? Why still this capacious Thing called Conscience. The Poet says, *Vis fieri dives, Bythinier conscius esto*. You, I believe would render it conscious, but I think it may be more properly construed : If you will be rich, be in their Sense consciencious. We have lived under that Model of Religion, in which, *Nothing hath been accounted impious but Loyalty ; Nothing absurd but Restitution*.

But, O Blessed God, to what Heighth can preposterous, audacious Impiety arise ! Was it not enough that Men once crucified Christ ; but there should be a Generation of Men, who should also crucify Christianity ! Must he, who taught no Defence but Patience, allowed no Armour but Submission, and never warranted the shedding of any Blood but his own, be now again mocked with Soldiers, and vouched the Patron and Author of all these hideous Murders and Rebellions which an ordinary Impiety would stand amaz'd at, and which in this World he hath so plainly condemned in his Word, and will hereafter as severely sentence in his own Person. Certainly, these Monsters are not only the Spots of Christianity, but so many standing Exceptions from Humanity and Nature ; and since most of them are Anabaptists, it is Pity, that in repeating their Baptism, they did not baptize themselves into another Religion.

Fifthly and Lastly, Let us now, in the last Place, view the Horridness of the Fact, in the fatal Consequences that did attend it.

Every great Villany is like a great Absurdity, drawing after it a numerous Train of heterogeneous Consequences, and none ever spread it self into more than this ; but I shall endeavour to reduce them all into these two Sorts ; First, such as were of a Civil Concern.

cern. Secondly, such as were of a Religious Concernment. And 1. For the civil and political Consequences of it. There immediately ensued a Change of Government ; of a Government, whose Praise had been proclaimed for many Centuries, and enrolled in the large fair Characters of the Subjects Enjoyment and Experience. It was now shred into a Democracy, and the Stream of Government being cut into many Channels, it ran thin and shallow ; whereupon the Subject having many Masters, every Servant had so many distinct Services ; but the Wheel of Providence, which only they look'd on, did not stop here, but by a fatal ridiculous Vicissitude, both the Power and Wickedness of these many Rebels, were again resolved and compacted into one ; again it returned to many, with several attending Variations, till at length we pitched upon one again ; one beyond whom they could not go, the *Ultimumque Sec.* of all Royal Excellencies, as all Change tends to, and at last ceases upon its acquired Perfections ; nor was the Government only, but also the Glory of the *English* Nation changed, Distinction of Order confounded, the Gentry outbrav'd, and the Nobility, who voted the Bishops out of their Dignities in Parliament, were by the just Judgment of God, thrust out themselves, and brought under the Scorn and imperious Lash of Beggars on Horseback. Learning discountenanced, and Universities threaten'd, their Revenues to be sold, and Colleges to be demolished, the Law to be reformed after the same Model, the Records of the Nation to be burnt : Such an Inundation and Deluge of Ruin, Reformation and Confusion, had spread it self upon the whole Land, that it seem'd a kind of Resemblance of *Noah's* Deluge, in which only a few Men resided amongst Beasts.

Secondly, The other sort of Consequences were of a Religious Concernment ; I speak not of the Contempt, Rebuke and Discouragement lying upon the Divines, or rather the Preachers of those Days ; for they brought these Miseries upon themselves, and had

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more Reason a great deal to curse their own seditious Sermons, than to curse *Meroz* ; they sounded the first Trumpet of Rebellion, and like true Saints, had the Grace to persevere in what they first began ; courting and recognizing an Usurper, calling themselves his most loyal and obedient Subjects, never enduring to think of their lawful Sovereign ; till at length, the Danger of Tythes, their *unum necessarium*, scared them back to their Allegiance. I speak not therefore of these ; but the destructive Consequences of this Fact, was, that it had left a lasting Scandal upon the Protestant Religion ; *Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in Askelon, lest the Daughters of the Philistines triumph* ; lest the Papacy laugh us to Scorn. I confess, the seditious Writings of some Protestants have sufficiently baptized their Religion. See *Calvin* warranting the three Estates to oppose their Prince, see *Mr. Knox's Appeal*, and in that, his Argument for resisting the Civil Magistrate ; read *Mr. Buchanan's Discourses de jure regni apud Scotos* ; read *Vindicia contra Tyrannos*, under the Name of *Junius Brutus*, written by *Hottoman the Civilian* ; see *Pareus* upon the 13th of the *Romans* ; where he states *Atroce[m] aliquam Injuriam*, a large Term of easy Application, to be a sufficient Reason for Subjects to take up Arms against their King. But shall this be called a Comment upon the 13th of the *Romans*, it is rather a Comment upon the Covenant, both of which, as they teach the same Doctrine, so they deserved and had the same Confutation. But these Principles, like sleeping Lyons, lay still a great while, and were never compleatly actuated, or appear'd in the Field, till the *French Holy-League*, and the *English Rebellion* : Let the *Powder-Plot* be as bad as it will. Yet still there's as much Difference between the King's Murder and that, as there is between an Action and an Attempt ; what Bulls and Anathema's could not do. factious Sermons have brought about ; what was then contriv'd against the Parliament House, has been since done by it ; what the Papists Powder intended, the Soldier's have effected : I say, let the *Powder-Plot* be look'd black upon, as indeed it is, as the Product of Hell, as black as the Souls

and Principles of those that hatch'd it, yet still this *Reformation-Murder* will preponderate, and *January* will always have the Precedence of *November*. And thus I have traced this accursed Fact thro' all the Parts and Ingredients of it; and now, if we reflect upon the Quality of the Person upon whom it was done, the Conditions of the Persons that did it, the Means, Circumstances and Manner of its Transaction, I suppose it will fill the Measure, and reach the Height of the Words of the Text, *That there was no such deed done or seen, &c.* For my own part, my Apprehension of it overcharge's my Expressions; and how to set it off, I know not, for Black receives no other Colour: But when I call together all the Ideas of Horror, rake all the Records of the *Roman, Grecian* and *Barbarian Wonders*, together with new-fancied Instances, and unheard of Possibilities, yet I find no Parallel; and therefore, have this only to say of the King's Murder, That it is a thing, than which, nothing can be imagined more strange, amazing and prodigious, except it's Pardon. And now having done with the first part of the Text, does it not naturally engage us in the Duty of the second? Must such a Deed as was neither seen nor heard of, be also neither spoken of, or must it be stroak'd with smooth mollifying Expressions, is this the Way to cure the Wound, by pouring Oyl upon those that made it; and must *Absolam* be therefore dealt with gently, because he was a sturdy Rebel? If, as the Text bids us consider of the Fact and take Advice, (that is, Advice with Reason and Conscience) we cannot but obey it in the following Words, and speak our Minds; Could *Cressus's* dumb Son speak at the very Attempt of a Murder upon his Prince and Father; and shall a Preacher be dumb when such a Murder is actually committed; or, do we think 'tis enough to make long doleful Harangues against Murder and Cruelty, and concerning the Prerogative of Kings, without ripping up the particular, misterious and diabolical Arts of its first Contrivance; can things peculiar and unheard of, be treated with the toothless Generality of common Place; I will not be so uncharitable, as to charge a Consent in this particular, wheresoever I find

find a Silence ; I will only conclude such to fancy themselves wiser than others, and to wait for another Turn, and from their Behaviour, rationally to collect their Expectations. But whosoever is so sage, so prudential, or to speak more properly, so much a *Politician*, as to fit himself for every Change ; he will find, that if ever another Turn befalls this Nation, its Conversion will be truly its knocking down ; and therefore, these silent Candidates for future Preferment, I wish them no other Punishment for their treasonable Desire, but to be preferred under another Change.

But I have not yet finished my Text, nor spoke all my Mind ; I have one Thing more to propose, and with that to conclude. Would ye be willing to see this Scene acted over again ? Would you have the King, with his Father's Kingdoms and Virtues, inherit also his Fortune ? Would you, now Providence has cast out the destructive Interest from the Parliament, and the House is swept and cleansed, have the unclean Spirit return, and take to it self seven Spirits, seven other Interests worse then it's self, and dwell there ? And so make our latter End worse than our Beginning. We hear of Plots, Combinations, Parties joyning and agreeing ; and let us not so much trust in their Opposition among themselves: The Elements can fight and unite in one Body, *Ephraim* against *Manassah*, and *Manassah* against *Ephraim* ; but both equally against the Royal Tribe of *Judah*. Now if we dread these Furies being again let loose upon us, O let us fear the Return of former Provocations : If we would keep the Ax from our Princes and Nobles, let us lay it to our Sins : If we would preserve their Lives, let us amend our own. We have complained of Armies, Committees, Sequestrators, Tryers and Decimators ; but our Sins, our Sins are those that have suck'd the Blood of the Nation. These have purpled the Scaffold with the Royal Gore : These have plough'd up so many Noble Families ; made so many Widows, and snatch'd the Bread out of the Mouths of so many poor Orphans. 'Tis our not Fearing God, that hath made others not Honour the King : Our not benefitting by the Ordinances of the Church, that has enriched others with her Spoil.

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When I hear of Conspiracies, Seditions, Designs, Covenants and Plots, they do not much move or affright me: But when I see the same Covetousness, Drunkenness and Profaneness, that was first punish'd in ourselves, and then in our sanctify'd Enemies. When I see Joy turn'd into Revel, and Debauchery proclaim it self louder than it can be proclaim'd against: These, I must confess, stagger and astonish me; and I cannot perswade my self, that we were delivered to do all these Abominations. But if we have not the Grace of Christians, have we not the Heart of Men? Have we not Bowels and Relentings? If the Blood and Banishment of our Kings cannot move us; if the Misery of our Common Mother the Church, ready to fall back into the Hands of Purchasers and Reformers, cannot work upon us; yet shall we not, at least, pity our Posterity? Shall we commit Sin, and breed up Children to inherit the Curse? Shall the Infants unborn have cause to say hereafter, *Our Fathers have eaten the same Grapes of Disobedience, and our Teeth are set on edge by Rebellion and Confusion.* How does any Man know but the very Oath he is swearing, the Lewdness he is committing, may be scored up by God, as one *Item* for a new Rebellion. We may be Rebels, and yet neither Vote in Parliament, Sit in Committees, or Fight in Armies: Every Sin is virtually Treason; and we may be guilty of Murder by breaking other Commands besides the Sixth: But at present we are made whole: God has by a Miracle healed the Breaches; cured the Maladies; and bound up the Wounds of a bleeding Nation. What remains now, but that we take that Counsel that seconded a like miraculous Cure; *Go, Sin no more, lest a worse Evil come upon thee.* But since our Evil hath been so superlative; as not to acknowledge a worse: Since our Calamity having reached the highest, gives us cause to fear a Repitition, rather than any possibility of a Gradation, I shall dismiss you with the same Advice upon a different Motive; *Go, Sin no more, lest the same Evil befall you.*

Which God in His infinite Mercy prevent; even that God by whom Kings Reign and decree Justice; by whom their Thrones are establish'd, and their Blood reveng'd: To whom be render'd and ascrib'd, all, as is most due, all Praise, Might, Majesty and Dominion, both now, and for evermore. Amen.

